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HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS, INCLUDING ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVE ENJOYMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS

United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/131 of 13 December 1985 with the purpose of providing financial assistance to representatives of indigenous communities and organizations who wish to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The Working Group, which was established pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/34 of 7 May 1982, is a subsidiary organ of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and meets annually at Geneva. The Group has a two-fold mandate: to review developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples and to evolve international standards concerning indigenous rights.

2. The Voluntary Fund is administered by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and other provisions relevant to this Fund (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/1983/20). In this task, the Secretary-General is advised by a Board of Trustees composed of five persons with relevant experience on indigenous issues and serving in their personal capacity. The members of the Board are appointed by the Secretary-General for a three-year term renewable in consultation with the Chairman of the Sub-Commission. At least one of the members of the Board shall be a representative of a widely recognized organization of indigenous peoples. The report of the first session of the Board of Trustees was presented to the General Assembly at its forty-third session in 1988 (A/43/706).